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METAL
ALL THE TIME

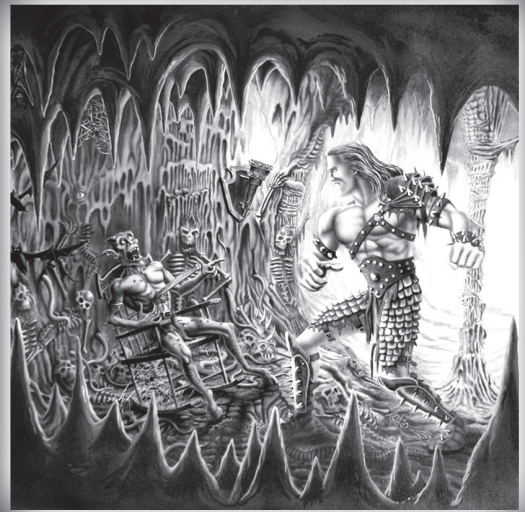
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BRIDE
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April/May '06 Issue #63 \$2.95

MORTIFICATION



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Erasing the goblin

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HEAVEN'S METAL

Rush, run, rush!

Sometimes it feels that way when deadline approaches for Heaven's Metal Fanzine. Originally, when I thought about doing this zine again, it wasn't going to sit right after the deadline for HM Magazine, but lately it's been doing just that – happening right after two straight weeks of late nights. But once I start writing and getting into the material, that joy returns. This issue was like that. I was putting off transcribing that 20-something minute interview with Mardo until the very end. Finally, there was nothing else left to do but transcribe it and get it in the zine. And that's when I rediscovered how interesting of a conversation it was. We've also introduced a "letters to the editor" section, so feel free to join in and become part of this conversation. I hope you enjoy this issue. Thanks for your patience in waiting a little longer than usual for it to come out. There's going to be some interaction between HM and Heaven's Metal, so don't think you're getting the big picture by only reading this one.

Grace and Peace,



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METAL TRACKS

Hard-news-for-metal-heads



L-R: Justin Murr, Greg Featherston, Pete Loran (Trixter), Mike Layne

Liberty N' Justice

INTERVIEW BY CHRIS BECK

We recently caught up with Justin Murr of Liberty N' Justice to discuss the release of their new album, *Soundtrack of a Soul*.

Chris Beck: What were the main things you wanted to change on *Soundtrack of a Soul* when compared to your last album, *Welcome to the Revolution*?

Justin Murr: I have made it no secret as an artist I was not really happy with *WTTR* for several reasons. One thing we (Greg Featherston and myself) did was bring in a great producer named Mike Layne. We also cared more about the songs than the singers, meaning we went out and tried to write great songs and then find the singer we felt fit the song the best. On *WTTR* we focused on the singer instead of the song.

Several well-known heavy metal musicians and singers appear on *SOAS*. How did you select who would be on the album and was it difficult to get the individuals to agree to appear on the album? Is there anyone you wanted to appear on the album that couldn't for various reasons?

We focused on the song and when we finished each song, we would write a dream list of singers we felt would be a perfect match for the song. I think "Killer Grin" sounds sort of like a Ratt tune and I think Stephen Percy is a great fit. To be honest, it was not that difficult – you can really tell when God is in control. This was very smooth and pain free. Jani Lane of Warrant was supposed to sing "Thy Will Be Done", but for personal reasons we could not get a time to get together to do the recording. Looking back, I think Pete Loran and Mark Slaughter are just perfect for the song and I could not imagine anyone else doing it!

Why did you choose to have vocalists from non-Christian bands sing on *SOAS*, which clearly has a Christian message?

To reach a greater audience with the life changing message of Jesus Christ!

Now that *SOAS* is done, what are your favorite songs on the album and why?

My two favorites are "Thy Will Be Done"... I love this hook and these guys hit a home run vocally, and "Malice In Wonderland." I am a big Jamie Rowe fan and I think these are some of the best lyrics I have ever written.

News bullets

Jamie Rowe was invited to meet with talent producers of the CBS television show *Rock Star* in Chicago. No word on Jamie's potential involvement was available at press time. Guardian recently re-recorded "Never Say Goodbye", and it is planned to be on Guardian's upcoming release. **London Calling**, another of Jamie's bands, hopes to have new music available soon. Jamie also appears on the *Ricky Parent Cancer Benefit CD* with his solo song, "Valentine".

After a year of recovery, **Michael Bloodgood** will head back into the studio to finish his solo disc, *Michael Bloodgood and Friends*. Collaborators include **Les Carlsen** and **Mark Welling** of **Bloodgood** fame.

Brian Maier is no longer with **A Call To Arms**. There are no hard feelings between the band and Brian, and they wish him the best and God's will in his life. They are currently auditioning for a new lead singer who is committed, positive, willing to work hard. The band's new album should hit in May.

Recently released: **Frost Like Ashes** *Tophet*, **Abandon S/T**, **Flee The Seen** *Doubt Becomes the Addiction*, debut for **Altera Enigma** *Alteration*, **Norma Jean O God the Aftermath** *Deluxe Edition* CD/DVD, the **Jeff Scheetz** live DVD.

Congratulations to the **Rob Rock** family, who were blessed by the birth of **Alexander John Rock** on 1/05/06.

Blissed will officially release *Corrosive* in May. They will also film two videos.

Year Of Desolation's new drummer is **Matthew McCutcheon** (Cast Of Eden).

Stephen Keech is now the permanent lead singer for **Haste the Day**, replacing **Jimmy Ryan**.

Guitarist **Kyle Simpson** has rejoined **1 Method**. The band will soon release a DVD, *Days Of Tribulation*.

Stryper's Myspace website promises that a DVD will soon be released. Guitarist **Oz Fox** is giving lessons in Pasadena, CA. See myspace.com/sirozfox for details. Former Stryperman **Timothy Gaines** is seeking a manager for he and his wife **Irene Kelly**, production work, and gigs based out of Nashville.

The Lead are excited to announce a double CD release in the works that will cover their entire back catalog. Julio Rey has been working on a solo project.

Stairway's *The Other Side Of Midnight* should hit shelves soon. "We feel it is our heaviest album to date and we are really excited about the release."



Demon Hunter

AN INTERVIEW WITH RYAN CLARK

What are your favorite songs from *The Trip-tych*? Why?

My favorite songs would have to be "Not I," "Fire To My Soul" and "Deteriorate." I think these songs just came out the best and have the most feeling. "Not I" was understood to be the opening track from very early on, because of the brutal nature of it. "Fire To My Soul" I think is a great example of the classic DH structure, but it has a twist of something new and progressive for us. "Deteriorate" obviously strikes a much calmer tone, but I think it helps maintain the mood of the record without getting weak. I think the melody and the tones we achieved came out really nice on this song.

When you look around at the music scene, how do you feel about the metal music that's out there? Which bands are impressing you, why?

It depends on which scene, but speaking specifically of hard music (metal, hardcore, etc.), I can honestly say that I'm not very impressed with what most bands are doing and what's being accepted as popular music these days.

I can understand why a band like My Chemical Romance is huge, because they've got it – the look, the hooks, the production, the vibe, the instrumentation... They have it nailed... But then, you have all of these bands that are riding on the coattails of that scene that are absolutely horrendous. They're all regurgitating a look that Manson did 10 years ago, and they're shamelessly trying to sound like some other band that

just recently hit the scene. They're catering to a young demographic of kids who JUST started listening to music, so they're able to pull the wool over these kids' eyes as they unabashedly steal things from the last decade of heavy music. It's one thing to be influenced by Sabbath. Or even Radiohead... But stealing the entire vibe and concept of the opening track from the newest AFI record? C'mon...

And in metal... You have everyone trying their hand at the Scandinavian sound – specifically the melodically heavy sound that was conceived by Swedish bands like At The Gates and In Flames. Some of these newer bands are really good at it, and they're able to put their own spin on it and make it interesting, but there are dozens of bands stealing this sound and pawing it off as their own – and kids are eating it up. It's become the popular thing to do... And it's getting really cliché and uninteresting.

All in all, I wish that today's bands were a little more concerned with paving their own way, and less with repackaging an existing sound / look for a new generation of fans that don't know any better.

Music snob? Moi?

Some new/recent/current heavy bands that I am into are Killswitch Engage, HIM, Decapitated, Becoming The Archetype, The Agony Scene, The Haunted, Zao, Darkane, Soilwork, AFI, Bloodsimple...

What's it feel like to have your videos play on "Headbanger's Ball"?

As Cities Burn will tour with **Underoath**, Poison The Well, **Spitfire**, and Since By Man for the entire month of May! You can get tickets for the shows before they sellout at underoath777.com.

Palehorse will have 2 guest vocalists on their upcoming *In The Theater Of My Mind* album. Alan Tecchio (Seven Witches) can be heard on "Mirror Image" and "A Tension Deficit"; while Deadly Blessing fans will recognize Ski singing on "Crisis Of Conscience".

Altheian will perform at Cornerstone, and Death 4 Life Fest II. They will also play the *Hell Freezes Over Tour*, and will be joined by **Becoming the Archetype**, **Inked In Blood**, and **Society's Finest**. While the band's primary goal is to share hope in a dark, hopeless world, touring has become financially draining. The band is offering a chance for diehard fans to donate to keep them on the road via a Paypal link at their online store. They would greatly appreciate help and support.

The official release date of the **Holy Soldier** DVD is pushed back to 4/22. California fans can anticipate a release party in April that will include a special offer to attendees. Some features of this DVD exclusive to pre-orders includes: "Whisky A Go-Go" performance featuring original HS vocalist **Robbie Brauns** and an early guitar player; Live in Fresno, CA with **Steven Patrick** in his 2nd performance with the band prior to an album release; pre-production video footage and behind-the-scenes footage; and an interview from Japan's version of Headbanger's Ball. Other bonus footage includes interviews (conducted by DVP) from Up From The Ashes show last summer.

Kekal's new album cover will have original artwork/illustrations done by their bassist, **Azhar Levi Sianturi**. Levi is known as an illustrator, and some of his drawings have been used for t-shirts. Two friends of Kekal, **Jason DeRon** and **Kenny Cheong** of **Altera Enigma** guest on the disc.

Mortification has secured a release of *Erasing the Goblin* through MCM Music in Germany, who will also manage the band. They release in secular and Christian markets as in the past with Veni Domine and Narnia. A limited edition of 500 copies of *Erasing* will be available at the end of March. This Rowe Production release is ONLY available at roweproductions.com through the soundmass.com store. Unique features of this limited release include: Each will be numbered, signed by each member of the band, includes a picture disc CD, a remake of "Dead Man Walking," and different artwork than the mainstream release. The band will conduct an auction for discs numbered 1/500, 7/500, 77/500, and 500/500. Each month, Mortification will announce who is leading in the bids. The high bidder in the end will receive the disc after the November 2006 tally. MCM has allowed this limited release to recoup costs of putting the album together. The MCM release will have artwork different from Rowe Productions' cover, and new song "Servants of the Supreme Message." The band asks that people buy their own copies and support both releases.

Randy Michaud performed with **Tykküs** for the last time on 3/31. The former lead singer will redirect his attention to his solo project, **Troglo-dyte Dawn**. The band posted this bulletin on Myspace, "While Randy will be missed, Justin, Dale, Steve, and Brian are committed to continuing with Tykküs and its vision, and auditions for a singer will begin right away. With an LP worth of new material and upcoming shows

METAL TRACKS

Page 6



SLAVE TO THE SYSTEM ROCKS!

I'd like to see another interview with you and Damon Johnson! Thanks.

—Clint Alexander, via internet

Ed – So, you'd agree with me that Brother Cane is the best band that Virgin Records ever dropped?

MYSTERY GUEST?

Hello again: Can you drop any hints on who you believe the mystery guest at Cstone will be on Friday night, encore stage at midnight? I was hoping for Stryper, but doubt it. Rez maybe? I don't remember them doing a mystery guest since booking the Flowers of Power in '91, I believe, who were in fact Vengeance Rising. Great show!

—Brian Lang, Wilmington, IL

Ed – Your hints are: He was the Frank in Mahogany Rush. Actually, that was both a flat-out lie and a deep-seated wish. I don't know about the Mystery Guest. Maybe it'll be Roger M's new band, Repentance...

STARTING TO DISLIKE

As a Heaven's Metal subscriber and a former HM subscriber, I'm starting to dislike the "old school" metal label at the end of these (e)newsletters. Why do you slight yourself with the "old" label? I read about a lot of new and current metal bands in Heaven's Metal. Heck, you even mentioned my previous band, Axehead Inc in an issue a year ago. Miles Sunde and Luke Renno are doing well with Crimson Thorn, still. FYI. I'll always treasure being in a band with them and being friends with those guys. Anyways, keep up the good work, Doug.

—Bryan Krotzer, via internet

Ed – I've changed the phrasing in the (e)newsletter, but I think you're just getting old...and you probably hated school. Wear the label or we will ask the members of CT to spin, body slam, and flatten you.

MILITARY MAN W/HIS ARMOR ON

Last summer I was in the desert of Iraq serving my country as a Military Police Specialist. I was away from my wife and kids and from the things I really enjoyed doing while home in the States. To keep up with what was going on, we were blessed with internet at most of the camps. I got an email stating that Petra was going to call it quits after 33 years of Christian ministry. It stated that they'd

be recording a live album and DVD. I received the Petra Farewell DVD in the mail earlier this week. I wish I could have been there to see Petra 1 more time. I remembered back in the early 80's when I just heard about Christian bands: Joe English, Resurrection Band, Jerusalem, Daniel Band. My best friend introduced me to Petra. They would become one of my favorites. A band always with a heart to reach the lost for Jesus and for 33 years gave us uncompromising rock and roll for Jesus. It is sad to see them go. After watching the video and hearing the songs "Creed," "Beyond Belief," "Jekyll & Hyde," "For Annie," "Grave Robber" and many others, I hope that it's not true that Petra will no longer be at the summer festivals or at the arena downtown sharing Jesus to thousands of people. I ask all music fans to purchase Petra Farewell to thank them for helping pave the way for many Christian artists and bands that followed behind them. Maybe we'll get lucky and, like the Rolling Stones, Petra will come out of retirement and surprise us with more music. And to the Christian music industry that turned their backs on these and other veteran Christian bands and musicians, SHAME ON YOU!!! FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY AND NOT OF REACHING THE LOST FOR JESUS!!!

—Kelly Williams SR, via internet

Ed – By the way, thanks for serving our country, Kelly.

SURFIN' SAFARI

I was just listening to a variety of Christian metal as I surfed the internet and was once again enjoying the HM website. I just felt it on my heart and spirit to let you know that your love for His music has had a great impact on many of us who have loved this music scene since the early 70s and 80s when true Christian rock included just a handful of bands. Wow, this music has come a long way from the days of Amy Grant vs. Petra. I just wanted to say thanks and I will always continue to support your magazine and ministry. From a fan of His music and your magazine ever since the first copy of the photocopied Stryper edition came out way back when. Hey, by the way do you still have copies from the early editions? And if you do, have you ever thought of putting those early, early editions out again in color? Just curious. God Bless

—Keith, via internet

Ed – I wish I had the cash & time to re-release those. Who knows, maybe if there was enough demand we could release one at a time...

[nothin' but] News bullets

already booked, they are confident that Tykküs will live on and experience even greater success in the future. Tykküs deeply appreciates the support and prayers of all our fans..." Unfortunately, Tykküs has had to pull out of Cornerstone for financial reasons.

Bride has a new permanent drummer, **Denny Johnson**, formerly of the 80's band the Bullet Boys. Denny has been rehearsing with the band for the last few weeks. The band is already working on new material. Presently, Bride is not on a label, but they will push forward regardless. Bride hopes to soon record and release pre-production work so that fans can have a sneak peek. The new release promises to be very aggressive, heavy, and creative. No U.S. tour is planned at this time, but a Brazilian tour is "in the works" for December.

Record label Bombworks records are now available at Tower Records and Amazon. They have signed deals that make their discs more available in Germany, Japan, Brazil, and Europe.

Final Axe has changed the name of its new album from *Blades of Blood* to *The Axe of the Apostles*.

The first-ever Christian progressive festival, is scheduled for 6/10 in Hughesville, PA. This all-day event is expected to draw fans from all over the world. Confirmed bands include: **Jacob's Dream**, Rivera/Bomma, **Revelation Project**, **Orphan Project**, **Trinity FSG**, **Blissed**, and special guests **Phoenix** and **Madmen & Dreamers**. Since the facility has a capacity for only 500 attendees, only 500 tickets will be sold. If tickets are sold out, people will be turned away from the gate no matter how far they have traveled, no exceptions. Purchase tickets at itickets.com or silentplanetfest.com. (That kinda sucks, huh?)

Nashville's **Victory at Last** has lost two band members: **Kyle Adams**, and **Robert Klee**. The band wishes both friends the best, and they look forward to the future. They are in search of a new drummer. If interested, drop them a line at their Myspace website.

Tom Taitano of **Totalisti** is now endorsed by Sonor Drums (Germany).

As I Lay Dying will be headlining this year's *Sounds of the Underground Tour*, along with: In Flames, Trivium, Cannibal Corpse, GWAR, Terror, The Black Dahlia Murder, Behemoth, **The Chariot**, and Through the Eyes of the Dead. Metal Blade is re-releasing the early Pluto recordings of the band, titled A Long March: The First Recordings.

Metal Blade is also releasing **Transatlantic Live In America & Building The Bridge** (DVD), a distro for **Neal Morse's** Radiant Records.

The May/June issue of HM Magazine includes a *Retroactive Records* sampler CD in all subscriber copies. Order one now before they're gone!



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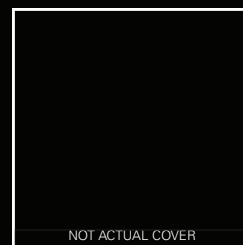
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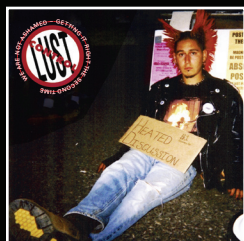
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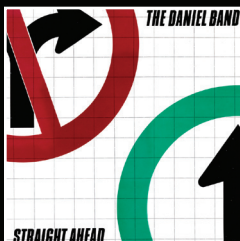
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X-Sinner
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w/ bonus tracks



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Straight Ahead
w/ bonus tracks



Daniel Band
Run From The Darkness
w/ bonus tracks



Bride
This Is It (Expanded)
w/ 4 previously unreleased
bonus tracks



Various Artists Compilation
Lightning Strikes Twice

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christiandiscs.com, radrockers.com, shaveraudioandvideo.com



Bride

BY DOUG VAN PELT

We all know this band. Most of us reading this have Snakes in the Playground somewhere in our collection. Weathering bassist and drummer changes, the brothers Thompson have been slugging it out for over two decades now. Feeling the weight of criticism and the ever-changing musical tastes out there, frontman Dale Thompson has communicated to his internet fanbase that they're weary of it all but ready to give it all they've got – maybe one last time. And this new album they're working on is it. This and another internet controversy hovering over the band makes this a good time to find out what is going on near Louisville, Kentucky. So I contacted the easy-to-reach Dale Thompson and conducted an interview.

What would you like to say about your band's history? So, Bride has made it to the...what – 20 year mark? More? Take us through the history of the band, touching on each musical release and comment on each one (with the experience of making it, highlights, and the perspective of looking back

on it). Be as brief or long as you'd like (If it's too long for print, the remainder will go on the website).

Bride formed in 1985. Since then we have recorded hundreds of songs spread out over many CDs – both major releases and independent releases. Our first record (album) was *Show no Mercy*. We had been signed to Pure Metal Records right after the label had saw us open for the Daniel Band in Pottstown PA. The entire recording budget complete was less than \$3,000.00. We started off as a two-guitar band and had a double bass drummer, which immediately pegged us as a metal band. As a metal band we recorded our next two albums for Pure Metal *Live to Die* and *Silence is Madness*, before realizing we could not sell albums playing music this heavy in the Christian market. People wondered why did we stop playing metal? The reason is, no shows, no tours no money and no audience. We signed to Star Song around 1990-91 after they acquired our musical catalogue in a

buy-out from Pure Metal. Star Song had originally intended on only releasing a greatest hits CD with two new bonus tracks. They had no idea that the two bonus tracks would be a change of gears for us and that the songs would be played intensely on Christian Rock Radio throughout the world. They really had no choice at that point but to sign Bride to the label. Our first CD with Star Song was *Kinetic Faith*. This introduced the Bride audience to a more hard rock side of the band. In doing so we lost the real thrash crowd, but gained a larger audience of rock fans. This launched us into many more shows; much more exposure and we were now playing large festivals that had never invited us previously. We were invited to tour with Stryper on their last tour before breaking up. The tour was enormously successful for us and we got a few years mileage out of the hype that it generated. Even though it was a small tour for Stryper, it turned into a cash cow for Bride. Our next release

was *Snakes in the Playground*, which in my opinion set a standard for every other rock band for the next few years. This CD gave us incredible life and energy and the band never sounded better. By now we did not have two guitarists or a double bass drum player, but no one seemed to notice or care. Our third project for Star Song was recorded without their consent. Star Song was really trying to get us to sign on for a longer term, but we were unsure about the move. We hooked up with producers John and Dino Elefante who flew us to their studios in California and there we recorded *Scarecrow Messiah*. Star Song gave in and released the CD with very little promotion and this CD fell flat compared to the monstrous release of *Snakes in the Playground* just two years previous. At this time we were without a label, but were approached by Michael Betts, who had started a label called Rugged Records. Michael took us in and we recorded a very percussive CD for him. This was a departure from our hard rock sound and, unfortunately for Bride and Michael, the CD bombed. We could see no reason to resign with Michael, so we approached John and Dino Elefante again, who now had a label called Organic Records. We soon signed with Organic and recorded *The Jesus Experience* and

Oddities. Both got rave reviews but the market was changing and Bride had not changed with the market. We were released from the label after two releases. We had heard that an old friend from Star Song, Dez Dickerson, had started a label called Absolute Records. We talked with Dez about signing Bride and after hearing some demos he signed the band. This hooked us back up with the producer from the *Snakes in the Playground* CD, Plinky. We had hoped to capture the vibe we had back in 1992. The recording *Fist Full of Bees* was a hard rock CD, but I insisted on adding my flavor of rapcore to the vocals. Needless to say, many of the Bride fans who had just grown accustomed to our hard rock sound did not understand what I was attempting to do. *Fist Full of Bees* turned out to be an amazing production and some of my best lyrics, but the fans did not buy it. We left Absolute after one CD seeking direction. By this point in our career we were not touring much at all except the huge shows in Brazil. The American market had closed its doors to us. We opted on the next release to take matters into our own hands. We recorded an independent CD, called *This is it*. We returned to the hard rock sound, raw and loud. But the sales were not very good because we had no real marketing machine in place to push the

CD. Our fans bought it, but anyone outside of the fanbase never heard about it. Our goal now, is to record another CD. It has been two years since our last release and we have been writing like crazy on a new CD. As of now we only have one label interested. But we do have a few distributors willing to get it into the stores. We are eager to get the new material into the hands of the public. We feel that this direction we are headed will be a welcomed relief from much of what they are hearing on the radio. We also hope to tour, travel and meet our fans again like we did in years past. It would be great to be label affiliated again but we'll see where God is leading us.

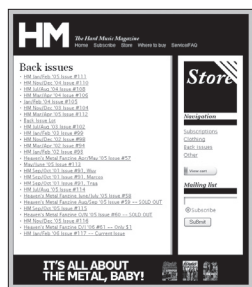
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I called Dale a heretic and tried to argue with him about his belief concerning Hell and the Lake of Fire. He didn't take too kindly to the label, but he did reason with me as to where he's coming from and how he got there. Try as I might, I wasn't able to turn his thinking around. So, I decided to ask about the band's new music...

* * *

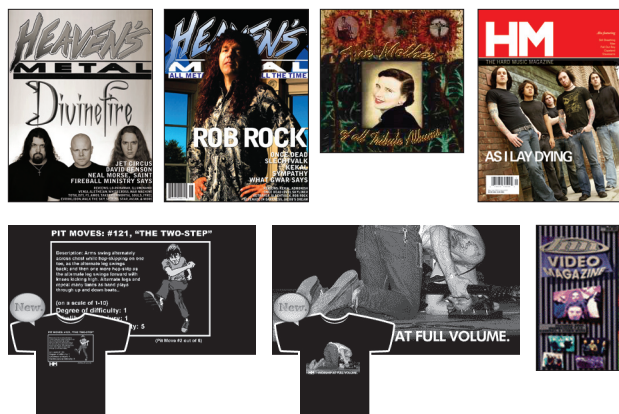
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6. Maylene & the Sons of Disaster, Skylines
7. Demon Hunter, Stavesacre
8. Nodes of Rancier, Spitfire, Zao
9. Sinai Beach, Underoath, The Showdown
10. Project 86 poster in May/June issue

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"The new CD is very heavy."



What's it feel like being a heretic?

...Am I trying to convince anyone of anything other than they believe? No I am not. I am no preacher or teacher. I am a married man of God, father of three boys, one who is serving his country proudly in the United States Air Force, and I live my life very normally. All I desire to do is to record one more CD for the Bride fans; and unless God fills my heart with more songs, I will quietly go away. For over twenty years I have taken it on the chin from one group of people or another and you know what? I am old and tired and I prefer normality over this farce of "Christian Rock." A lot of good has come from it, but there isn't one of us that have entered into this battle on the stage of life that hasn't been permanently scarred.

What does the new album sound like? What songs are standing out for you? Why?

The new CD is very heavy. There are a lot of complicated grooves and thick guitars. We now have a double bass player and this is adding to the heaviness. I explore many themes throughout the CD – from a personal look at war in the song

"Super Power," to the artificial high of being on the stage in "Super Ego Star." This is a CD that is not overly religious. I have stepped back, taken a good long hard look at my life, the world and where I think it is heading. I just put it on paper and I am preparing to sing about it. We went for so long just struggling to write, very dry and empty; then God opened the flood gates with inspiration. I am not interested in writing about and saying the same things I have already said, or trying to say something better or clearer, I believe the ideals in this new material are very fresh for us. No, there are no references to my "new-found doctrine" anywhere on the new CD. It is not deliberate; it just wasn't on the forefront of my mind while writing. At first, when I started seeing things differently and applying them, I felt very exposed. It is like getting a tattoo for the first time. You want everyone to see it, so you proudly show it off. Eventually you forget that you have a tattoo, or in my case, many tattoos, because they become a part of you. They are no longer that foreign object on your skin. They are now realized and the realization is they are in deep and they are not coming off.

Anything else you'd like to add?

You could be sure to mention that my son, Alex – who did play drums on our last Brazilian tour – has joined the Air Force. He contributed in the past by co-writing "Would You Die For Me" from *Snakes in the Playground* and most of the song "Dadmom" from *Scarecrow Messiah*. He will also have a song on the new CD. Alex plays drums, piano, guitar and is a great songwriter and athlete. He has so much more potential than I have ever had. I would appreciate if you could request that people lift him up in prayer as he serves his country for the next 6 years. He was also my weight lifting partner. His mother and I truly miss him.



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NARNIA | AHEAD OF THE GAME

BY CHRIS BECK



Carl Johan Grimmark

What's in a name? How do you choose the name of your band? What does it mean and does it really even matter? Maybe you want a band name that conveys a certain feeling or passion, or is associated with an event in the life of the band members. But what is the public's perception of the name? I'm reminded of a few years ago, when the country's attention was focused on letters that were being mailed to people containing the deadly poison anthrax. September 11th had just happened, so everyone was sensitive about other potential acts of terrorism. Shortly after the story broke about the letters, the band Anthrax talked about people contacting them, dumbfounded that they could name their band after such a heinous act, of course not realizing that had been the band's name for years. As you can see, a band's name can come to mean more than ever imagined, which brings us to Narnia. The band has been around for almost ten years, but it was just this past year that Disney released the live action film The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, making the classic C.S. Lewis series The Chronicles of Narnia more popular than ever. Do you think people are noticing the band more as a result? We asked Narnia guitarist Carl Johan Grimmark about this and much more.

Chris Beck: You have a new album coming out called Enter The Gate. Tell us a little about the album.

Carl Johan Grimmark: It's a brand new start for us as a band, musically and spiritually. We didn't really like the way *The Great Fall* turned out, so this album needed to be the revenge. Musically it's a very melodic album but with a slightly more aggressive sound than earlier. So, we're somehow back to our basics but in a modernized way. The lyrics are far more positive and 100% focused on the Christian message. *The Great Fall* was more dark and pessimistic, and we felt that's not what the world needs today.

What, besides the darker lyrics, do you not like about the album *The Great Fall*?

Well, the production didn't turn out the way we planned. I could talk forever about what could have been done better, but the production and the lyrics are probably the main problems I have with it.

What songs from *Enter The Gate* do you like the most and why?

I like the song "Into this Game" very much. It's a great up-tempo opener on the album. I also like "Another World" very much because of the way it builds up and the way Christian delivers the message in a way he has never done before!

***Enter The Gate* is the first Narnia album that won't be released by Nuclear Blast. Why are you no longer signed with them? Are you happy with your current distribution deals with Massacre Records and Attic Arcade/Gencross?**

Yes, that's right. We felt that Nuclear Blast were growing so big that we got no priority and in the end they decided not to pick up the option. Anyway, we are very happy for the years we had with them – they put us on the map. Our new labels seem very positive about having us and we feel the same. I hope it'll last and turn out to be great for everyone involved.

You've personally had the opportunity to play guitars with Saviour Machine and Rob Rock. How did each of these collaborations come about? How do your experiences with these bands compare to Narnia?

I have a different role in those projects, of course, being only the guitar player who doesn't write songs or anything. My role in Narnia is much bigger as I write all the music, some lyrics and also produce. But I've very much enjoyed trying something completely different. Saviour Machine is like a lesson in how many odd numbers you can remember during 3 or 4 hour-long shows, while Rob Rock is straight metal where one of the major challenges is to represent in a live situation what has been played on record by virtuosos such as Chris Impellitteri and Tony MacAlpine.

Christian Rivel, lead singer of Narnia, has also worked on other projects such as Divine Fire and Audiovision. Do you think that having most band members of Narnia working on other projects has had any negative impacts on Narnia?

Of course there are at least two sides to every story. It's hard to focus on too many things when every day has no more than 24 hours, but on the other hand it has given us more experience and connections that we have good use for in Narnia. We have all agreed on Narnia being our main priority!

Since Narnia is a Christian band, are you ever the target of persecution at your concerts or in other situations?

Not very often. People usually don't threaten us directly, but of course there are people who very much dislike our attitude and the way we deliver a no compromise Christian message into the secular metal scene. There's constantly ongoing debates regarding satanic messages vs. Christian messages in metal music, and some people really hate us for some reason....

Do you think Namia will ever tour in the United States?

That's been on my mind very much during the past year and we sincerely hope so. We appreciate any kind of help in this matter and hope that promoters want to book a few shows.

Now I'll ask a question that you've probably been asked many times, but I'm not sure everyone knows the answer. Why did you decide to name the band Namia? It isn't necessarily that unusual, as many bands draw their name from or write lyrics about *The Lord of the Rings* or other fantasy stories, but you've remained loyal to *The Chronicles of Namia* with songs titled "The Witch & The Lion" and "The Return of Aslan."

It was Christian's idea. We liked the way that it combined the common metal fantasy-world theme with clear Christian symbolism.

Disney recently produced the live action film *The Chronicles of Namia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. Have you seen the movie and, if so, what do you think about it?

I still haven't seen it. I'm either too busy or too lazy.

Has the popularity of the movie had any noticeable effect on the band's merchandise sales or had any other impacts?

I have no idea yet whether it has affected our sales or not, but it sure has taken a bunch of people to our website.

If we were to look into your CD player today, what band would we see?

At this very moment, Liquid Tension Experiment (the project with some Dream Theater members and Tony Levin on bass) is in the CD player in my kitchen.

Earlier we mentioned that you've played with Saviour Machine and Rob Rock. Are there any other projects that you are currently working on?

Yes, I'm now working very hard on my first solo record. I'm having some very good musicians on it. Peter Wildoer from Darkane will be on drums and Jan S Eckert from Masterplan will play bass. It's not yet 100% decided who will handle the vocals. I'm very excited about this project.

As a musician, we've discussed writing, recording, producing and performing. Which of these do you enjoy the most and which one do you enjoy the least, and why?

Performing would be my favorite since you actually get to see your audience and their reactions; there's a certain spontaneity about a live show which makes the whole thing very exciting. Also, it's sometimes very powerful when God touches people in a special way through our music. Completing a studio production is also very satisfying! Sometimes the recording process can be a little heavy because it can take so much time. Yet, I enjoy most of the recording as well!

Fans of Namia can never seem to agree on one thing...which Namia album is the best one. All four albums are chosen by different people as being the best for one reason or another. So I ask you...besides the new album, which one is your favorite and why?

I personally like *Desert Land* very much! One of the reasons is the songs, of course, but also the very raw and live sound it has. We really got the energy down on tape on that one.

Namia has been together now for almost 10 years. Looking back, have you accomplished what you had envisioned for the band when you first started?

Basically yes, but it has taken up until now. We now feel like a very strong unit that



wants to give it all for the Lord.

If you were to set three goals for Namia to accomplish over the next couple of years, what would they be?

1. To tour the US, Japan and South America. 2. To write and record a new album as soon as my solo album is done. 3. To see as many people get saved as possible!

Do you have any closing thoughts you would like to share with the readers of *Heaven's Metal*?

Sincerely, from my heart – I can't wait to open the first Namia show in the US. Please tell your local promoters to contact our management, MCM Music. Hope to see you soon!!!





Sonny, Aron, and Robert

What Mardo Says...

Mardo has too much fun on stage. What they do is probably illegal in some states. I had a good time talking with Aron Mardo, one half of the brother team that started this band (fka The Spies), and an even better time watching them open for King's X a few nights afterward.

Doug Van Pelt: I've got a really weird question for ya to start things off...

Aron Mardo: Finally!

If you could go back in time and keep any one song from all of musical history from being written, which song would you choose? And why?

(laughs) Wow! That is a really weird question. You think you've done a lot of interviews and you think you've pretty much heard 'em all! Um, wow... It would probably have to be "Back in Time" by Huey Lewis & the News in the *Back to the Future* movie.

I guess we wouldn't miss that one, would we?

Actually, I really like that song, but I thought for the question it made perfect sense. If we could go back in time, I would probably go back in time to stop "Back in Time" from being written.

(Laughs) Well, what are the factors that've gone into the lipstick, makeup and drag visuals for glam and roots rock bands? Beyond the New York Dolls, what social or psychological reasons explain this behavior or attraction from the performers?

Wow! That's kind of a lot of questions! Um, well, if you're asking that because you think we're kind of a glam band...

No, no.

Or are you just asking that because you like the Dolls?

Well, there's connections. I mean, I've seen your pictures and don't consider you guys to be of that visual look, but there's a connection there with the kind of style of music.

Uh, yeah, there definitely is. We pull influences from all over the place. And, as far as imagery, too, the same thing. We don't try to fit in any sort of category. I mean, if the Gap sold bell-bottom pants, I'd wear 'em because I like wearing cowboy boots and their peg-backed jeans just don't look good with 'em, ya know? But I don't watch an old RCA tube television just because it's retro. I have a brand new plasma flat screen, ya know? I think that, to answer your question, I think a lot of that scene

just came out of, you know... Kind of like I think what happened with grunge. Just the kind of a... What's the word I'm looking for? A rebellion against excess - whatever it may be. Like, grunge was kind of the opposite of the excess, bloated budgets of the music business and, you know, the 80s in general. I think that scene was kind of the same thing, in my opinion. As far as, socially and society as a whole. Shoot, I don't know. I just know what's in my little two square feet of the world and what I see from my eyes.

How has the tour with King's X gone? What have been the highlights for you guys?

Oh man, every day is kind of a highlight. It's been surreal. I mean, we got back from Europe, playing huge stages over there, basically rock and roll fantasy shows every day. And then we go over to Austria with R.E.M. and they're dedicating songs to us in their set; and then we get back and we get this call. We only wanted to do a couple shows with these guys in California, because we couldn't have imagined doing any more than that. And Ty really liked the website and he loved the band and he called us and said, "Hey, we want you guys on the entire tour." And it's been... like I said, it's been surreal. I mean, I keep feeling like I'm going to wake

up naked in school tomorrow and this was all a dream or something, ya know? But the highlights? Every day is great. Every day during the soundchecks, me and Ty talk about the Beatles, because we're both big Beatles fans. I talk about Sly and the Family Stone with Doug. My brother and Jerry kind of play. They kind of heckle each other and have a really cool relationship and talk about Led Zeppelin. The highlight is, you know, their fans are amazing and they have us at their merch booth every night, right next to them with our merch, because they want us to meet their fans. Their whole crew helps us. They've given us part of their soundboard. But I'd say the highlight has to be certain nights when the stages are smaller and there's a lot of local acts, the band just lets us use all of their equipment, so we don't have to worry about having soundcheck, we don't have to worry about people messing with our equipment as far as local bands or striking our drums; so when I get to play through Doug's cabs and my brother's sitting up on Jerry's drumstool, you know, rocking with King's X's band but with Mardo's set that's pretty much a highlight every time that happens.

That sounds pretty cool.

Great, great, great guys. And the crew. Since day one... My brother and I have been doing it a long time and you meet a lot of great people and you meet a lot of jerks. And these guys have just treated us like family since day one. And they've really, really looked out for us. It's just a dream - dream come true. It's been a great year.

That's really cool. What was the spark that made you want to start a band?

I don't know, man. I never wanted to do anything else. For as long as I can remember, this is what I was born to do. And, something I don't tell a lot of interviewers, but I do get asked that question every now and then, and I end up telling them, when I was born, I was born with what's called humangioma. What it is it's a brain tumor that is only in children. The reason it's only in children is that 90% of them don't live past the first six weeks. And I wasn't supposed to live past my first six weeks and I ended up spending the first two years of my life in the UCLA Medical Center and ironically, at two years old it completely vanished then and there's been no trace of it since. With that always kind of in the back of my mind, I guess, subconsciously, as a kid, I knew I was put here to do something and it was something extraordinary. That's why I was allowed to have a second chance; so once you get a gift from the gods like that, you just don't question it.

Cool. Well, I've got another bizarre question.

Alright.

If you had the world's attention and allegiance and could make any changes with just your word and authority, how would you solve the following problems (and I've got a few here):

First, the Israeli-Palestine conflict?

Ha ha. You know what, man? Some things have been going on for a long, long time and they're going to go on for a long, long time. And, we were in the rehearsal studio about four years ago and we shared a lot of

rehearsal spaces... The Chili Peppers would be there at the same time, and we became really good buddies with them. And when this whole thing first started again over there, the Chili Peppers were about to have to go over there and all the other guys wanted to cancel the tour and Kiedis just was like, "Well, maybe I could go over there and, you know, I could make a difference and I could make a change," and all the other guys kind of looked at him, like, "This has been going on for thousands of years and it's going to be going on for thousands of years and you think going over there and singing 'Californication' is going to change that?" And so, if someone like him wouldn't have a chance, you know? I don't think someone like me would have a chance of doing anything about what's going to happen and what's meant to happen over there, you know?

Yep. How 'bout the war on terrorism?

That's every day. As far as I'm concerned, the best way to fight the war on terrorism is to continue on about your life. I would never live in fear. We all know the great man who once said, "The only thing to fear is fear itself."

How 'bout human rights violations, like the political prisoners in China?

Well, ironically, I am a huge student of many different philosophies; and I read a lot and am a big history fan. I'm a big fan of the I-Ching, which is the book of change. Part of the I-Ching is... It's all universal law and it's all universal knowledge, and part of it is that everything that happens is for your best benefit, and nothing happens by accident and you live in an absolutely perfect universe, where there are no mistakes. So I think that one can answer that question. I can't... you know, what am I going to say? "It's great?" No. It's terrible, but, you know, everything happens as it should for a reason and some good will come out of every negative - or seemingly negative situation - to help. Wow, you're a good interviewer, man!

Ha ha. Thanks.

Hats off to you. I'm glad you're not just giving us, 'So, do you guys like Led Zeppelin, or...?' I hate that question! Who doesn't?

Yeah, no kidding. What do you think about Jesus Christ?

What's there not to think about? I mean, to each their own, you know what I mean? Is this a Christian magazine?

Yeah.

(bleep)-ing A. That's awesome! Ha ha. You know what I think? I'll tell you this right now. My brother and I are Armenian. And a lot of people know - a lot of people don't know - the Armenians had a lot of firsts in all of history. They were the first people to have an actual alphabet. They were the first people to create the dome over churches, and they were the first people to accept Christianity. And I've always been that way. So, I think that answers your question.

Cool. What do you think about His claim to be "the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the

Father but by Me?"

Well, you know what, man? (makes mouth-full chewing sounds - like sandwich-in-mouth sounds) Another thing that me and my brother strongly believe in is private practice of religion, and (we) don't like to go out of our way to... I don't know. We just think that some people hide behind religion to do what they want to do - to point their finger at other people and to me one of the biggest messages in the Bible is, "Whose right is it to judge anybody else for what they're going to do?" You know? When it comes to stuff like that, we kind of keep it to ourselves.

That's probably not a very bad decision.

Well, you know, it can get... I can very obviously, I'm a musician and let's face it: when you're growing up and you do something that's out of the norm, you're going to take a lot of heat from a lot of people, so obviously I'm a very strong believer in what I feel and know is right; but that doesn't mean I have to push it down anybody's throat and judge them because they think a different way than me. You know? To each their own.

Yeah. You might ask the guys in King's X this story if you haven't heard it already, but I've known the guys for years and apparently back in the early 90s Rolling Stone sent a reporter to hang out with the band for, like, three days to do a big story. And the reporter kept hounding them to talk about their faith. And Ty and the guys were like, 'No way. We're not going to talk about it. No comment.' And then finally, I think it might have been Doug... He said, "Okay, here's the deal..." And for, like, ten minutes he spelled out the deal of what the guys collectively believed or whatever, and then, lo and behold, the story comes out and all they focus on was their religion.

Yeah, and they're not a Christian rock band.

Yeah...

Which, you know, it's kind of like, they're great songwriters, great musicians, great guys. Report it. Why don't you write about what the three days were about. What people want to hear about? So... To each their own. Everyone's got... Like I said to you, I study all religions, because ignorance is unacceptable. I'm a huge fan of all different artworks, cultures - you name it - I like knowledge. And I don't want to have to turn my back on anything, but I know what I believe in, and it's nobody's business but mine, unless I choose to share it with somebody. But I'm not going to push it on somebody, you know what I mean?

Uh-hmm.

We played in Nebraska on this tour with the guys and Nebraska said, "King's X and Mardo, da-da-ta-da..." and the guys were like, "Aw, crap. It says, 'Christian rock.' I thought we shook that." So I gave 'em a little gift when we took the stage. I introduced ourselves as, "Mardo, the best mother-(bleep) Christian rock band money could buy."

Hmm-hmmm-hmmm-hm (slight chuckle)

I think that that kind of spelled it out for them, you know what I mean?

ALBUM REVIEWS



THE SOULS UNREST

S/T

Technical thrash and death metal loaded with unusual time changes, this album will keep you on your toes.

As soon as you think you recognize and understand the melody the band is playing, it changes to an equally divergent melody. Just over 25 minutes long, this album consists of seven tracks from separate recording sessions in 2003 and 2004. Though the sound of the second set of songs isn't quite as clear as the first, the production is still good overall. Due to its complexity, the music of *The Souls Unrest* can occasionally be difficult to digest, but fans of brutal music should enjoy this album.

[Bombworks] Chris Beck



MY SILENT WAKE

SHADOW OF SORROW

Ex-Seventh Angel and Ashen Mortality vocalist and guitarist Ian Arkley returns with *Shadow of Sorrow*, an

album with recognizable similarities to the aforementioned bands. Epic doom and death metal with some thrash influences, one will not soon forget the beautiful lead guitars that hauntingly permeate each song on this album. Eleven tracks in total, including the two songs from their limited demo (which appear here in the same form), *Shadow of Sorrow* is almost 80 minutes in length, with both "Hunting Season" and "Lost" clocking in at over fifteen minutes each! Completing the package is the great cover artwork by Rexorcist, who once again has successfully captured the essence of the album with his skills. Those looking for a doom metal fix should not pass on *Shadow of Sorrow*.

[Bombworks] Chris Beck



TRANSFIGURAL FORM

BLOOD

Good metal. Cliche, but good. Metal to the bone. Solos, growling, plodding classic metal tempos. [Indie] DVP



STRIDE

IMAGINE

From the city of Houston, which has given birth to great progressive bands like King's X and Galactic

Cowboys, comes progressive metal/rock Stride. Previously an instrumental only band, these guys have now added the incredible voice of Gary Belin (sounds like Steve Perry and Steve Walsh) who injects their music with tons of melody. The sound is an amalgam of early Dream Theater and Journey with tons of influence from the more melody driven progressive acts of the 70's like Kansas and Triumph. These guys are extremely tight and the production quality is first rate. While there is quite a bit of pomp and showmanship here, amazingly, it is incredibly easy to digest because of the emphasis on melody. The lyrics are very positive and uplifting, real "feel good" although perhaps a bit cliché at times. In fact, the only major fault here may be that these guys wear their influences too well, lacking some of that all important originality. In all honesty, this music is so well executed and so enjoyable that I find this more a positive than a negative. Like label mates Redemption and Circus Maximus, these guys are really trying to bring melody and positivity back into balance with the dark themes and technical prowess so pervasive in the genre. Stride's music is just fun, so role down the windows, crank up the volume and drive! [Sensory] Jonathan Swank



THREE

THE RADIO HITS

I'm not sure what radio stations are spinning these songs, but if these are hits, I'm sorry (but), I'm going to

switch stations. Vocally, I kind of like Caspar McCloud's sound, reminding me of Y&T's Dave Menicetti. Caspar has an incredible history, once playing the part of John Lennon in the Broadway musical *Beatlemania*. He's played with the likes of Phil Keaggy and has garnered much respect for his fine guitar playing. He was actually healed from a life-threatening heart condition. These songs are

reminiscent of the classic rock of the 70s. Think Wishbone Ash, Humble Pie, or early Petra. [Silent Planet] DVP



LISIYA GORI

DEMO

The music of Lisiya Gori is equal parts death metal, modern thrash (think Lamb of God) and classic thrash.

Blastbeat drumming and fast, heavy rhythms prevail throughout this excellent three-song demo. These songs are brutal, as evidenced by song titles such as "Demonolith Down" and "Broken Blasphemy." Lyrics aren't included; however, the f-bomb is dropped once at the end of the album (confirmed by the "Parental Advisory" notice on the face of CD). Rumor has it this band will be signed to a record contract soon, so if you're interested, get this demo while you can.

[Indie] Chris Beck



SEVEN ANGELS

FACELESS MAN

This female-fronted power metal band from Brazil musically reminds me of fellow compatriots Eterna.

Growling vocals are used on a couple songs, making for a nice 'beauty and the beast' effect. Beauty is in the eye (or ear) of the beholder, however, as it's Debora Serri's singing that holds this band back. She simply doesn't have the vocal power or range of someone like Tarja Turunen (ex-Nightwish), but then again, who does? Overall, *Faceless Man* is a decent effort, but I'm ready to listen to something else by the time this album is over. [Bombworks] Chris Beck



MAD MAX

NIGHT OF WHITE ROCK

Scary good production and great guitar licks and tones. These German melodic rockers deliver a world class

record, with elements of Accept, AC/DC, and a slew of 80s melodic metallers (Trixter, White Lion, Crue). A must-hear. [AOR Heaven] DVP

SPHERIC UNIVERSE EXPERIENCE MENTAL TORMENTS

Though comparisons to Dream Theater are overused, with this five-piece from France, the comparison is inevitable. *Mental Torments* has many similarities to Dream Theater's *When Dream and Day Unite*, with a hint of atmospheric rock ala Pink Floyd. The lyrics, which are sung in English, convey an indecipherable message that is oftentimes typical of progressive rock. Questions are pondered, but no answers are to be found. The standout track is "So Cold," the album opener and the first radio single. Clocking in at almost 70 minutes, *Mental Torments* is a quality release that fans of keyboard-infused progressive metal will enjoy.

[Nightmare] Chris Beck



MORTIFICATION ERASING THE GOBLIN

I think this album is the best Mort release in several years. I am at least loving the string-

bending and vibrato pressing during the blistering and quick solos and lead fills. While technically proficient, it also has that one great ingredient any rock and roll needs - attitude. I love it. While at times plodding and slow, the tones stand out as primo and great. Some forays into classic thrash, like the Roger Martinez-ish "Short Circuit," this album, perhaps, finds Steve with the perfect players to translate his love for classic metal into death/grind sound the band based its reputation on all those years ago. Think, maybe, *Blood World* meets *The Wretched Spawn*. [Rowe/MCM] DVP



LIBERTY N' JUSTICE SOUNDTRACK OF A SOUL

Soundtrack of a Soul is a collection of 15 original songs performed by vocalists

and musicians from popular heavy metal bands, both Christian and non-Christian. Where else can you find Jamie Rowe (Guardian) and Dale Thompson (Bride) on the same album with Sebastian Bach (Skid Row) and Stephen Pearcy (Ratt)? It may seem unusual to hear Oni Logan (Lynch

Mob) sing the Christ-centered lyrics from the song "Show Me the Way," but that is part of what makes this album unique. Does it work? Absolutely, yes. *Soundtrack of a Soul* is a vast improvement over the last LNJ album, *Welcome to the Revolution*, in every way. The outstanding songwriting and performance by each musician make this an album that all metal fans should have in their collection. Highlights of this unparalleled album include the up-tempo rocker "Thy Will be Done" sung by Mark Slaughter (Slaughter) and "If the World Could be Mine" with the emotional delivery of Joe Cerisano (Trans-Siberian Orchestra) that fits perfectly with the song. 80's metal fans, rejoice! This is the album you've been waiting for.

[LNJ Records] Chris Beck



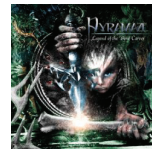
RIVERA/BOMMA I AM GOD

Don't let any of your twenty-something friends hear you spinning this one. It's as operatic and over-the-top theatrical power metal as it comes. Now that you're isolated and insulated from the scorn of these young'n's, let me rave about the shredding of Rod Rivera: in concert with the power drumming and accented keys, it screams to be noticed. Ritchie Blackmore fans will dig it. There's some mean flamenco playing on "La Voz De Mi Guitarra." Those who cheered on when Stewart was beat up by Beavis and Butthead will hate this, and Johnny Bomma's Broadway-esque vocals especially... But the production on every detail is undeniably stellar. They're doing this power metal right. Lyrically, there's some real highlights, like the worshipful "Riding High," which claims: "I found Him in the lonely place and His love will never fail." Yes! [Mausoleum] DVP

DESYRE

OUT OF THE BLUE INTO THE RED

Glam metal a la Poison. While the vocals sound like the Finnish import that they are, it's a real all-out throwback like The Darkness was a couple years ago. [Glam Nation] DVP



PYRAMAZE

LEGEND OF THE BONE CARVER
Power metal with strong progressive influences, the latest album from Pyramaze

is perhaps the heaviest album that Lance King has been a part of. The guitar work of Michael Kammeyer on *Legend of the Bone Carver* is excellent; his constant, driving rhythms balanced with the perfect amount of crunch remind me of Gus G's playing with Firewind. Yet, with memorable choruses and the use of keyboards throughout the album, *Legend of the Bone Carver* still retains the melodic qualities of Lance King's past projects such as *Shining Star* and *Balance of Power*. As its name implies, *Legend of the Bone Carver* is a concept album. One can find many spiritual parallels within this epic tale, which is about a boy born of unknown origins to save the world from evil (sound familiar?). Every song on this album is great and is a key part of the story, but the song that amazes me every time I hear it is "Souls in Pain." This song has several unforgettable guitar riffs - more than you typically hear on an entire album. In addition to Lance King's amazing vocals, there are also spoken parts and guest vocals by Christina Oberg on a couple songs, providing just the right amount of variety without being a distraction. Some people say Lance King is involved with too many projects, but if they all sound as good as *Legend of the Bone Carver*, I say he is a music mastermind who knows exactly what heavy metal fans want to hear.

[Nightmare] Chris Beck



LUMINARIA ARCHE

Doomy, gothic, progressive, power, operatic - all over the hard rock musical map. Intricate, clean lead

guitar playing. The droning vocals are non-commercial. Imagine Eric Clayton, but without the projection. At times I can hear Peter Steele's vampire vocals. Nice! The keys and drumming offer a lot of jamming and talented playing to keep your ears dancing around the mix. [Bombworks] DVP

It feels great. I remember watching HBB when I was younger, so it's an awesome honor to be part of a show with such an expansive and prestigious background. Plus, it introduces the band to new people. We've received a good amount of fan mail from people that first heard/saw us on Headbangers Ball.

If you watch the episodes with your videos, describe what goes on, the context where you watch it, etc.

We watch some of the episodes. Usually the episode where a new video is first aired we try to catch. Usually a handful of us will get together and watch it.. For the Infected debut, we had a party where everyone came over and we watched it together. We always wait and see if someone hosting/appearing on the show will announce it before it plays or say anything about it afterwards. Good times.

You have been nominated for some awards for graphic design and album cover art layout. Congratulations! You guys do great work at Asterik Studios. Why do you think album cover artwork is important? How do you approach a project (please share details/ideas/any common steps you take...)

Thank you – in regard to the nominations – Never thought we would go to the Grammy's, but it was a lot of fun – and a huge honor. Artwork is important because it gives a face to the music. People want something visual. We aren't content with JUST listening. Everyone wants to SEE the band, or at least see something visual that represents them. It's the same reason that music videos make sense. Art-

work roots back to a time when there were no music videos, so the only visual you got of an artist was through the album packaging, and maybe photos in a magazine or something. Album packaging should be the best and most defining visual representation of the artist.

When you say the word Nirvana, what comes to mind? Is it a song, or an image? I'd say an image comes up first. Some people may visualize an image of Kurt or the band, but I think some people see that naked baby in the pool, swimming towards the dollar. These images are the other piece of that puzzle. Many artists (Slipknot, Bjork, AFI, Sigur Ros, Marilyn Manson, Kiss, Demon Hunter, etc.) would not be who they are without their unique visual representation.

PLUS – with the ever-growing threat of a download-only music audience, it's our goal to make it "worth it" for fans to go to the store and actually purchase the product with the package. I think we achieve that a lot of the time. We attempt to make artwork that's classic and not trendy. I hope fans appreciate a band's product in full, artwork included. Most of the time, we're approached by a client, be it a band, manager or label, and if it's something we're interested in, and all the details work out, then we get started. Usually we start by conceptualizing, most of the time based on the album title and what it means to the band. We start with a cover, and once that is approved, we move to the rest of the package. Some packages take months, some take days. It all depends.

Why do you think it's important for Christians to make good music? Please respond not only to the question of excellence in the craft of art, but also the value of lyrics that address Scriptural truth...

It's important for Christians to be seen as intelligent, creative, inspiring people who are excellent at what they do, no matter what that is. The only way to make an impact in a Godless world, specifically referring to the music industry, is to be great. If you aren't taken seriously as a musician, your beliefs won't be taken seriously either. It's unfortunate that a lot of Christians are content with being "good enough" or "the Christian equivalent to..." when they should be aspiring to be BETTER than their peers. Christ is better than any man, so Christians should strive to make better music, better art, better movies, better clothes, better whatever...

In regard to lyrics of Scriptural truth, it's important that lyricists be excellent because the lyrics are in essence, displaying your beliefs.. So if you want people to be moved by what you're saying, and for your words to be powerful, you have to speak the truth, know what you're talking about, and be great.

Anything else you'd like to add?

Thank you to all the readers for the Demon Hunter votes in the HM readers poll! You guys rule!



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Uh-huh. It said that on the marquee?

No, it said it in the weekly.

Oh, okay.

I don't think they'll say that again next time we're in town.

What keeps you from making Rob Small or any other musician a permanent part of Mardo?

They are a permanent part of Mardo. It's just that we found Rob after we made the record.

Okay.

I mean, when me and my brother left The Spies, we'd sold, you know... We sold 35,000 records. We were all over magazines. We charted in Billboard. We couldn't turn on the tv without getting away from our music. And when we walked away, we walked away with just ourselves – nothing else. And, when we made this record, we immediately went in and we wrote and recorded this record at home in five weeks with our producer, Buddy Les Pearce. And, you know, we had nothing but the two of us. We didn't have a band put together yet when that record was finished. And then we met Rob when I was doing the artwork – like the cover painting and we were getting ready to package the record, we met Rob. And, um, it's a gift. And so I wouldn't consider anyone that we work with, as far as, you know: myself, my brother, Smalls we call Jags, Sonny Sly is a keyboard player that we found playing at a high school. Our crew chief, you know what I mean? Our label president, one of the kids that answers all the mail for the label – I wouldn't consider any of them not part of Mardo. They're all part of the family. That's the bottom line. We'll continue to grow, but truth is truth. Rob wasn't around when this record was finished. We're getting ready to go into the studio to make our second record before we go out on the road again in February. Rob Smalls is going to be playing on that record. So, I think that's a pretty big part of Mardo.

Yeah, cool. Well, if you could go back in time again, what sort of advice would you have given yourself, say, ten years ago?

For a Christian magazine to be asking me a bunch of times to go back in time, I don't know. Isn't that a little, uh... Isn't that pushing the envelope there?

Ha ha. Why not?

What advice would I give myself if I could go back in time? Nothing. Nothing at all. I'm perfectly satisfied with where I am and where I'm at and for trials, tribulations, and victories I've achieved, because it's made me who I am today.

That's a great place to be.

Yeah.

What's the most fun you've had as a band that wasn't on stage or playing music?

That's a hard question. That's like asking what your favorite song is. Um, it's crazy. I mean, touring. When you start getting a lot of press. When you start getting a big 'buzz band' routine. Great, whatever. People start looking and paying attention and wondering what's going on, but then when you play and you play on major stages and you play in front of hundreds of

thousands of people and bands that you admire and maybe even idolize are scared to follow you – before you go on stage you see the terror in their eyes. That's a lot of fun, man.

Awesome. Well, what's one question you've always wanted to be asked by a journalist?

Um. What do I prefer? Blonde girls or brunettes?

Which is it?

Both at the same time. I don't know if you can write that stuff.

Yeah.

You can?

Yep. That's one thing that I like to do is print what people say...

Awesome!

Not re-write them or put words in their mouth or try to make 'em say something.

Good for you, man. You know, you don't meet... You meet... There's some great journalists, you know? And you meet some that really try to do but can't do because they're not as organized, because they don't record or whatever...and they try to quote you properly, but they misquote, even though they...ta-da-da-da... I admire you, big-time for that – and that is, like I was trying to say with us, you know? We believe what we believe, but at the same time I'm not going to try to change anybody or push anything on anybody else. To each their own, you know?

Yeah.

Very good for you. I really appreciate that.

That's the way it should be. I mean... Especially if you want to have any kind of longevity...

Exactly.

You can't just, uh... You can sell some magazines if you have a juicy story, but you're never gonna talk to that person again.

Yeah, a bad reputation is easy to build, but it goes away really quick. A good reputation? Well, it takes a lifetime, but it'll give you a lifetime, too. Ya know? Very cool. Well, I'm looking forward to definitely meeting you tomorrow. Austin's a great city and I'm very excited to come back there and play again. We haven't been there for a couple years.

Cool. Likewise!

So, definitely come up and introduce yourself so we can hang out a little bit and we'll have some fun. We'll watch King's X together or something.

Right on. Sounds great. I'll bring a couple copies of the mag, too.

Thanks, man. I really appreciate that.

You bet. Take care.

Alright. Talk to you soon. Bye.



[Ironic note: Rob Small has since left the band.]

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THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET

By Steve Rowe

IS IT WORTH THE PAIN?

Staying many years in Christian music ministry can be a frustrating vision for those who choose to follow this path of communicating The Gospel of Jesus. For me, Mortification is 80% about ministry & 20% about great art. Of course, you cannot survive very long in music if the artistic side is not what music fans expect to hear and see. So be warned if you step out into this kind of work for God...

Unfortunately, music is about business. More and more groups and especially record labels are focusing on the dollar factor; rather than the importance of why we play Christian music. Sure, I need money to keep doing what I do. I can't do anything with music if the priorities at home are not paid. The frustrating thing is that when you really do something like this for the kingdom of God, people often expect you to do things for nothing. I am happy to do this for a good cause and I know my vision states that money is not the focus. But (are) all of us really equal?! It's just some seemingly are more equal than others...

It is so frustrating for me that many great Christian metal acts have cracked under financial pressure. Sure, where God leads He provides, but He cannot go against man's greedy free will. Some of the rip-offs that have happened to Christian musicians – by other Christians especially – have been very sad to witness first-hand; and for this reason, I also stand frustrated in a world writing me daily to come and share the Gospel in their country. My ability to go has been stopped by the greed of others.

Right now we really cannot do a lot, especially touring, because of the history I have had with people taking advantage of my enthusiasm to present Christian music to both the saved and unsaved. I have been told more than once, "Hey, don't complain, Steve. After all, the only reason people have your album is because we put it out." Yes, true, but hard to stomach when I paid for



the recording and art costs and see little in return.

God has been faithful and it seems that He is always calling me to continue on, because people have been so blessed from all over the world. Many are coming to faith through our music... But if you are the artist, generally you are last in the food chain. It is no glamorous path – that is for sure – and often frustrating. However, through Christ we are more than overcomers and when you hear about the fruit of true Christian music ministry it makes all the pain worthwhile.

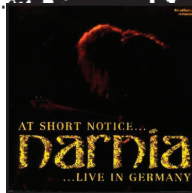
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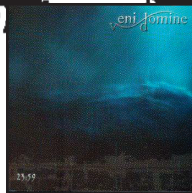
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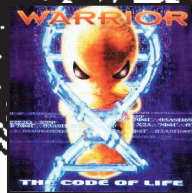
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SOUND ADVICE

By Pastor Bob

The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. 1 Kings 19:11-13

It had been a busy day. There were the more than usual number of phone calls, email, and people dropping by. When I finally got to bed, I felt exhausted. As I lay in bed ready to fall asleep, I felt good about the lives that I had touched and the ministry details I had attended to. I suppose that's why I was a bit surprised when I awoke a few hours later with my heart stirring.

At first, it seemed like an interruption. After all, I had already had a very full day, and needed my sleep before I tackled another day. But there I was, fully awake. I prayed that God would help me fall asleep again. But He had something – rather, someone – on His mind.

As I began to pray in the stillness and quiet of the night, God began to place a particular person on my heart. My prayer was now focused, and my heart was engaged. I don't know how long I prayed. It was a fair amount of time. I drifted back to sleep as the burden lifted.

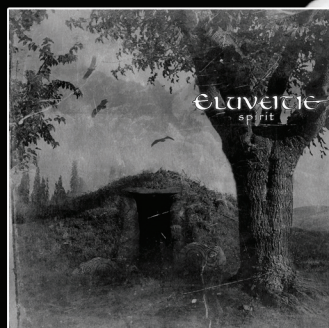
The next day, my first mission was to call the person I had prayed for. I could imagine all kinds of tragic scenarios. I expected to hear a weak and suffering voice on the other end of the line. Instead, his voice sounded happy and peaceful. There was no drama, no crisis, and no despair. It left me a bit confused. I know for certain that God had given me a burden to pray, for which I had expected some type of crisis.

I continue to be surprised at just how much God truly loves us. I am reminded of all the times people have told me that they had a burden to pray for me. I had simply assumed that maybe they had averted a crisis with their intercession, or that maybe there was some kind of "secret" sin that I needed to be more aware of.

Then it hit me. God's greatest delight is in my joy. His desire is for my continued maturity. Since that night of intercession, I have become much more aware of God's desire for me to pray for other's growth – that their delight in the Lord would increase to overflowing. I am learning to listen for His gentle whisper, instead of continuously being distracted by the "winds, earthquakes, and fires" of life.

Allow God to put someone on your heart this week. Not because they are in crisis or needy, but simply because God loves them, and allows you the privilege of praying for them!

In these evil times we will rise!



Eluveitie - Spirit CD
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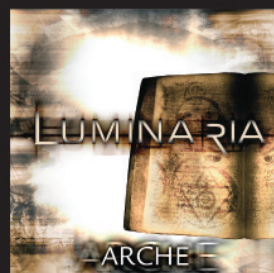


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